(b) Two postst of Vice-Chairman (Judicial) and 14 posts of Member (Judicial) are vacant.

(c) to (f) The vacancies of Vice-Chair man (Judicial) and Member (Judicial) were advertised in December 1992 and June 1993. Eligible candidates were interviewed in December 1993 and January 1994. Panel recommended by the Selection Committee has been approved. Offers of appointment for 2 Vice-Chairman and 11 Members have already issued and they have been requested to joi$_n$ by 31.8.94. Remaining offers will be issued on completion of formalities.

Operation of Luxury Tourist Tra'ns

2225. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH;
SHRi PRAMOD MAHAJAN:

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the pla$_n$ t© involve the private sector in the operation of five luxury tourists trains;

(b) which are the proposed routes of the five luxury trains and by what time the proposed luxury trains are expected to become operational; and

(c) what will be the Railway's initial expenditure on these trains and how much annual profit is expected to be earned by the Railways from this scheme?

THE MINISTER, OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF): (a) to (c) Ministry of Railways have invited bids from Public and Private Sectors for ownership; Marketing and Management of Tourist Trains on the following routes:

1. Delhi - Jaipur - Agra - Gwalior -Jhansi - Varanasi - Lucknow - Delhi.
2. Goa (Madgaon) - Mangalore -Mysore - Hosi;t - Bangalore - Goa (Madgoan).
3. Bombay - Aurangabad - Nanded - Secundcrabad - Hyderabad - Pune - Bomba :.
4. Howr.Ji - Gaya - Varanasi -Gorakhpur - Bhubaneswar - Puri -Howr^ .
5. Bangalore - Mysore - Madras - Kodaikanal Read - Kany- Kumari - Trivendrum - Cochin - Mertupa-iayum - Bangalore.

In response to the global invitation to bid issued by the Ministry of Railways; twenty three bid$_s$ were received upto the closing date i.e. 25th July; 1994. The bids ar$_e$ now being evaluated by the Tender Committee for awarding the contract to **the** successful bidder. Lead time for construction and launching of the tourist trains will be one year from the date of finalisation of contract. No expenditure is being incurred by the Railways as the capital cost [a]«d cost of haulage and maintenance is to be borne by the Tourist Train Operator. Besides these costs, the successful bidders will also be required to share a minimum 15 per cent of their gross turnover from the operation of the tourist train service.

.Reduction in working expenses..

2226. SHRI SUSHHJOJMAR SAMBHAJIRAO SHINDE:
SHRI RAJNI RANJAN SAHU: SHRIMATl VEENA VERMA;

Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that an action plan alongwith economy measures undertaken by the Railways in 1993-94 has resulted in reduction of working expenses to the tune of Rs. *200 crores during the year; and

(b) if so; the details of th$_e$ measures taken?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI C. K. JAFFER SHARIEF); (a) and (b) From 1989-90 onwards

in tiie beginning o|f the financial year, a series *Oi* steps were planned io be taken for augmentation of earnings and reduction of working expenses. This exercise was done every year. In the year 1993-94 also, on [7]he basis Oi experience gained in the earlier year, a revised Action Pian was launched on the Railiways to effect improvement in Operating Ratio by augmenting earnings and containing Working Expenses. Broad areas where economy in expenditure was to be effected are detailed below:

(i) Energy conservation;

(il) Better asset utilisation,

(iii) Elimination of redundant activities and wastages like;

(a) Expeditious condemnation of Steam Locos, Steam Cranes. Steam Sheds etc.,

(b) Closure of redundant yards etc.,

(c) Critical control over con sumption of high value items.

(iv) Cost control, cost reduction and cost effectiveness in all online and off line activities.

(v) Belter Inventory control.

A saving of Rs. 200 crores was coniemplated in the Revised Estimates of Ordinary Working Expenses which were fixed at 1.70 per cent lower than Budget Estimates 1993-94, This is after absorbing a number of pos-i-budgetary factors the impact of which is about Rs. 200 crores. The targets fixed in this regard in Revised Estimates, have been achieved.

Construction of Railway Station at Senthil .Nagar between Ambathur and Annanu; Madras

2227. SHRI N. GIRI PRASAD: Will the Minster of RAILWAYS bo pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the public demand fqr privieiow of a Railway Station at Senthil Nagar between Ambathur and Annanur railway stations on Madras.Ttruvel-lore suburban section of Southern Railway is under Government's consideration ior the last few years;

(b) if so; when the demand was originally made and what is the present stage of the proposal; and

(c) by when this project is expected to be approved and funds be sanctioned by Govrnment?

THE! MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHM C K. JAFFER SHARIEF); (a) and (b) Demand Irom the local people for opening of halt station at km. 17/10 near Senthil Nagar between Ambathur And Annanur stations was originally received in 1985. The same was examined but not agreed to as it involved substantial capital cost and heavy recurring financial loss. This position still holds good even at present.

(c) Does not arise.

I'L'Ocurement of Computer Soft.ware

2228. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE;: WiH the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that despite heavy investment on computer hardware for the computerised reservation and other EOT system on the Railways, no investment has been made fo$_r$ acquisition of computer software;

(b) whether it is also a fact that this affects the security, privacy and level of performance of the computerised system; and

(c) if so^ what steps have been taken by Government to procure such computer software and suitably upgrade/update it to meet the growing needs of the India$_n$ Railways U the changing scenario?